

**REVISED PRELIMINARY STAFF REPORT  
2009-2010 SOUTH COUNTY AREA PLANS REVIEW**

**SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S):** MASON

**APR ITEM:** 09-I-2L

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**NOMINATOR(S):** Plaza 500 LLC represented by Martin Walsh

**ACREAGE:** 34.16 Acres

**TAX MAP I.D. NUMBERS:** 81-2 ((1)) 7

**GENERAL LOCATION:** Southeast of the Edsall Road and Winter View Drive intersection

**PLANNING AREA(S):** Area I  
**District(s):** Lincolnia  
**Sector:** Bren Mar Park (L3)  
**Special Area(s):** N/A

**ADOPTED PLAN MAP:** Industrial and Public Parks

**ADOPTED PLAN TEXT:** The 34-acre Plaza 500 tract on Edsall Road is planned for light industrial and warehousing uses up to .50 Floor Area Ratio (FAR).

For complete Plan text see <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/area1/lincolnia.pdf>

**PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT:** Add an option for mixed use development up to 1.85 FAR.

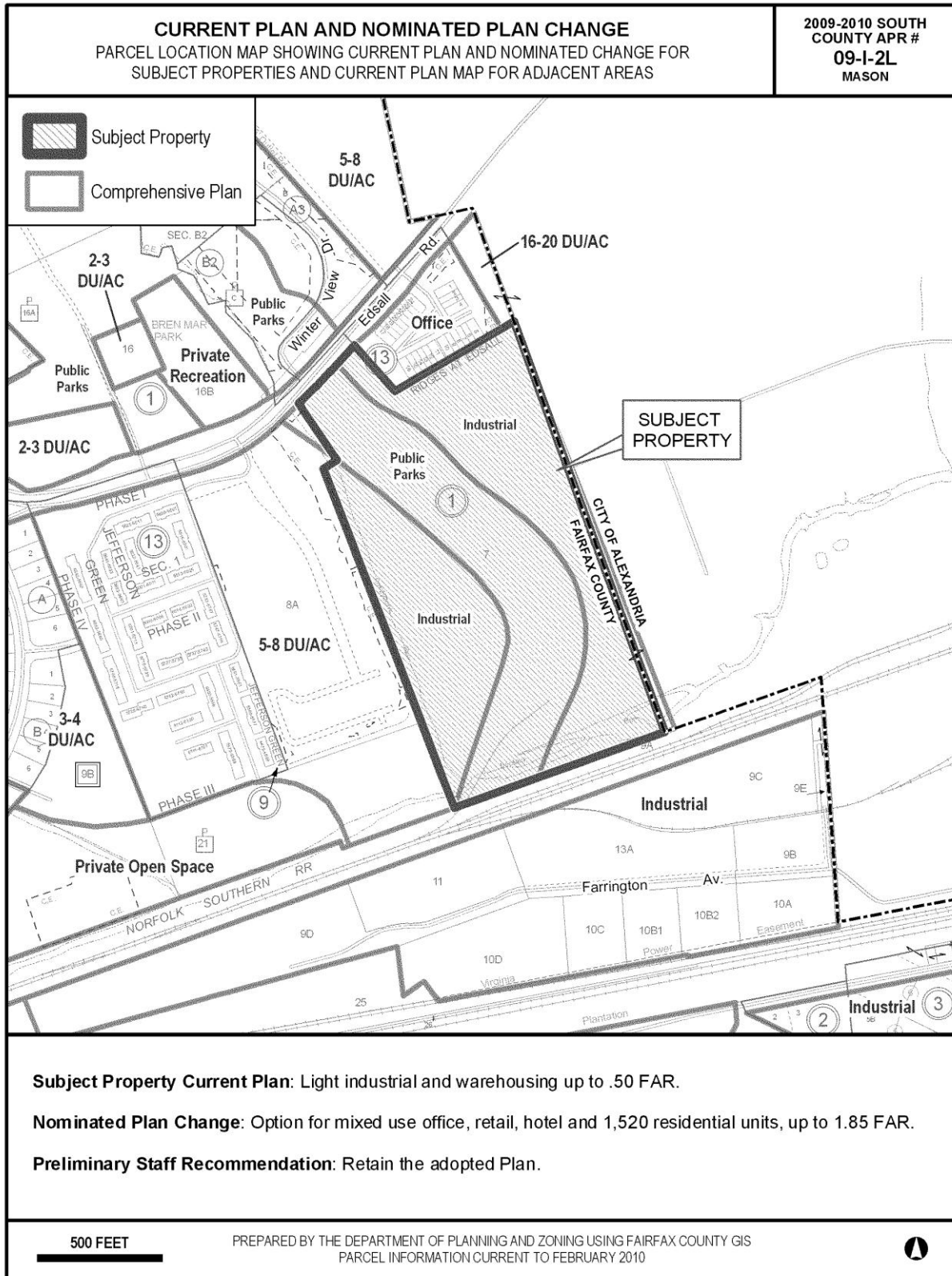
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**SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

☐ Approve Nomination as Submitted  
☐ Approve Staff alternative  
☒ Retain Adopted Plan

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The nominated parcel is developed with a 511,000 square foot light industrial warehouse building at .34 FAR. For the VDOT 527 review, the nominator proposed 2.45 million square feet of mixed use at 1.65 FAR with an alternative for 2.29 million square feet at 1.54 FAR. Staff does not support the proposed intensification. The massing and scale of the proposed development would be out of character with existing and planned land uses in the surrounding area. This level of development would have significant traffic impacts and the nominator's proposed transportation improvements are insufficient. This intensity would also have significant parks impacts.



## Land Use

### Background

The subject property is bounded by commercial and industrial uses to the east in the City of Alexandria, and Backlick Run and Turkeycock Run along the western and southern boundaries of the nominated parcel. Adjacent to the north is land that is planned for office use up to .25 FAR, but developed under a Plan option with residential townhouses at 5-8 dwelling units per acres (du/ac). North of Edsall Road is Bren Mar Park. To the west is vacant land planned for residential townhomes at 5-8 du/ac.

The original nomination proposed 1,520 residential units (1,700,000 square feet), office use (900,000 square feet), hotel use (90,000 square feet), and retail use (60,000 square feet) at an overall FAR of 1.85. The nominator provided the following concept plan for this proposal:



For the VDOT Chapter 527 review, the nominator reduced the mixed use proposal to 1.65 FAR with an alternative 1.54 FAR.

### Issues

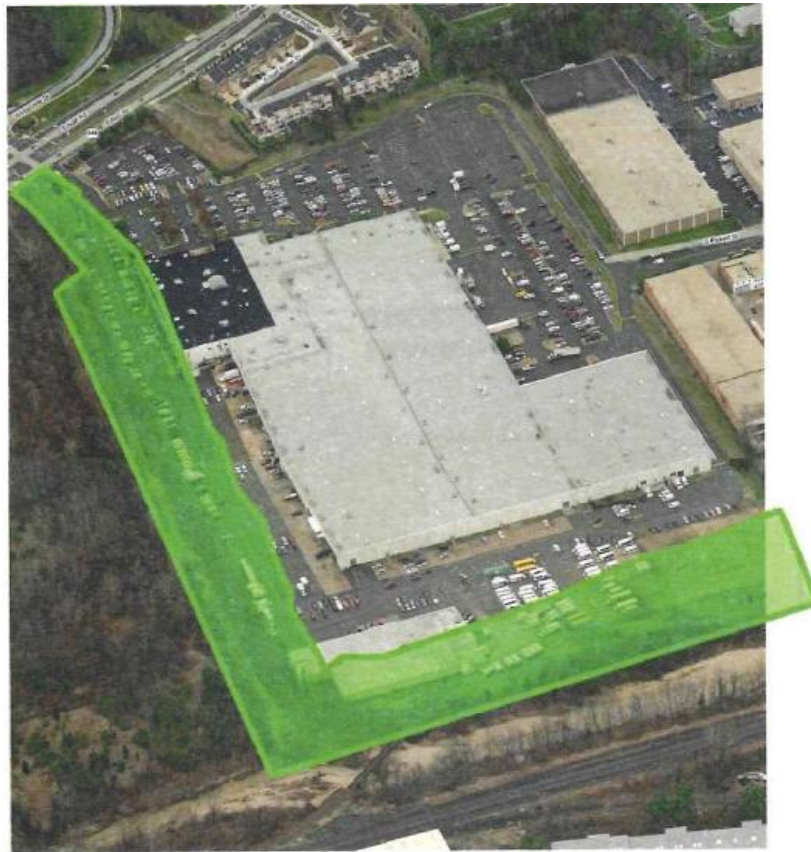
- The current Plan nomination proposal for 2.29 or 2.45 million square feet of mixed use development consisting of 650,000 or 736,000 square feet of office use, 14,000 square feet of retail use, 1,357 or 1,394 residential dwelling units and 260 or 300 hotel rooms raises concerns about the compatibility of the proposed use and intensity with the existing

surrounding community. Picket Street east of the nominated parcel, is currently developed with light industrial and retail uses, Bren Mar Park and residential townhomes are developed to north and planned to the west. Given these established uses, the proposed use and intensity are out of character with the surrounding area.

- The proposed option for mixed use development would replace planned industrial use on the site. The reduction of industrially planned areas may undermine the County's ability to provide appropriate locations for industrial and ancillary uses in the future.
- The proposed option for mixed use development is viewed by the nominator as an opportunity to promote transit-oriented development (TOD) at this site. According to the Policy Plan Guidelines for TOD, a TOD area is "generally defined as ¼ mile radius from the [rail transit] station platform with density and intensity tapering within a ½ mile radius from the station platform." Redevelopment at this site would not meet this general TOD definition as the site is approximately one mile walk and drive from the Van Dorn Metro Station.
- The amount of proposed development on the site raises concerns about the ability to address park and transportation impacts.

#### Environment

- An Environmental Quality Corridor (EQC) is located within the nominated site as shown by the shaded area in the graphic below. Ideally there should not be any encroachments into the EQC in order to protect the ecological quality of streams. Staff acknowledges that much of this area has been developed and that little of the natural characteristics typically found in any EQC are present. Redevelopment of the area should provide an opportunity to eliminate existing encroachments in the EQC and provide some degree of restoration.



RPA LIMITS AS REVISED BY 2009 APPROVED PLAT

### Parks

The current proposal would facilitate a potential increase in residents within the Lincolnia Planning District by about 3,700 individuals [(Townhouses  $20 \times 2.96 = 59$ ) + (Multifamily  $1,374 \times 2.65 = 3,641$ ) = 3,700]. Residents will need access to park and recreation facilities on-site or nearby. Using adopted service level standards for parks and facilities, this increased population will generate the need for about 1.5 rectangular fields (1 per 2,700 residents), two basketball courts (1 per 2,100 residents), 1.5 playgrounds (1 per 2,800 residents), 0.5 diamond field (youth baseball 1 per 7,200 residents), and 18.5 additional acres of local parkland (5 acres per 1,000 residents). County policy states that Plan amendment proposals should address impacts to parks. If the nomination is accepted, the Park Authority staff recommends that the Plan option for mixed use development be contingent upon addressing impacts to parkland and facilities.

The subject property is currently almost 100% impervious surface area adjacent to Backlick Run Stream Valley Park in the Cameron Run watershed. The majority of the site is located in a Resource Protection Area. The un-detained stormwater from this property likely increases flooding and stream erosion on both adjacent and downstream parklands. This includes Huntington Park, for which County and Federal agencies are planning significant measures to control flooding in the Huntington area. Any redevelopment of the site should be viewed as an

opportunity to significantly reduce stormwater flows over existing conditions that could greatly benefit the receiving streams and associated parkland.

### Transportation

The Code of Virginia (Chapter 527 §15.2-2222.1) requires localities to submit Comprehensive Plan amendments that will substantially affect transportation on state-controlled roads to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). The threshold is any amendment that would generate 5,000 additional vehicle trips per day, assuming the highest density permissible, above the Comprehensive Plan. This nomination required a VDOT review. The following are excerpts from Fairfax County Department of Transportation's (FCDOT) comments regarding the traffic impact study submitted per the Chapter 527 requirements. A full copy of FCDOT and VDOT comments are attached.

#### Current Comprehensive Plan Guidelines and Background Information:

- The Plaza 500 property has two points of ingress/egress. The first is on the north side of the property with access to Edsall Road. The second is on the east side of the property where S. Pickett Street starts in the City of Alexandria. There is an informal connection between the driveway on the north at Edsall Road and the driveway on the east at S. Pickett Street that allows for vehicles to drive through the site. The walking distance to the Van Dorn Metrorail Station from the east driveway (via S. Pickett Street, S. Van Dorn Street, and Eisenhower Avenue) is approximately a mile or a 20 minute walk. The walk requires pedestrians to cross S. Van Dorn Street at S. Pickett Street as a sidewalk only exists on the west side of S. Van Dorn Street.

#### Proposed Land Use and Density for APR Nomination 09-I-2L:

**Table 1**

**Current Comprehensive Plan Land Use and Proposed Changes**

<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Existing Development</b>	<b>Comp Plan (0.5 FAR)</b>	<b>Proposed 1.65 FAR</b>	<b>Alternative 1.54 FAR</b>
Industrial	511,000	744,004	0	0
Office (sq. ft.)			736,000	650,000
Retail (sq. ft.)			14,000	14,000
Residential (units)			1,394	1,357
Hotel (rooms)			300	260
Total Sq. Ft.	511,000	744,004	2,455,213	2,291,532

\*Alternative reduces office by 86,000 square feet, residential by 40 units, and hotel by 40 rooms.

The table above shows the proposed changes to the Comprehensive Plan for the nominated area. The nominator had originally proposed a mix of uses at a 1.85 FAR; however, the intensity was reduced when the traffic study was submitted. The nominator has now proposed a maximum development potential of 1.65 FAR and a lower alternative scenario of 1.54 FAR.

#### Transportation Conclusions

- S. Van Dorn Street is severely over capacity under the current Comprehensive Plan prior to any increase from the proposed development.
- Three of the seven intersections analyzed in the study are failing under the current Comprehensive Plan and they are all located within the City of Alexandria. With the proposed development, Bren Mar Drive/Edsall Road falls to a level of service E in the PM and Winterview Drive/Edsall has a failing level of service in the AM after mitigation and with the reduced alternative proposed by the nominator.
- The nominator has proposed an 18% trip reduction for office and a 25% trip reduction for residential development. This is based on a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program and the Van Dorn Metro station located approximately one mile from the site. No justification, such as data or a study, was submitted along with traffic study to support these higher reductions. For comparison, a plan amendment adopted by the County in July of 2010 adjacent to the future Route 28/CIT Metrorail station, has a goal of reducing residential and office trips by 30% within a ¼ miles and 25% and 20% for residential and office development, respectively, within a ½ mile of the station. This site is located a mile away from the Van Dorn Metro station and proposing to achieve reductions that are more typical of a site within a half mile of a Metro station.
- The site is generating the equivalent of a full lane of traffic on Edsall Road and only two minor intersection improvements are being proposed. The primary mitigation measure proposed to remedy the increase in traffic is a TDM program, which based on the study appears to be insufficient.
- There are significant impacts on all three intersections at S. Van Dorn Street. The nominator has proposed minor mitigation at the S. Van Dorn Street/Pickett Street intersection and it is only on Pickett Street. Additionally, the Bren Mar Drive/Edsall Road intersection now operates at an unacceptable level of service and through traffic on Edsall Road eastbound in the morning is significantly impacted with the proposed density increase.
  - Fairfax County policy is to maintain a level of service of D at all intersections and roads within the County. When this cannot be attained then there is a non-degradation policy, which means that a proposed development should fully mitigate all impacts associated with their site so that the problem is not compounded.
  - The traffic study shows that the development proposed by the nominator not only impacts every intersection but these impacts are not fully mitigated on the intersections that are failing. Additionally, the nominator did not propose any street improvements such as adding a north-south road that could alleviate some traffic on S. Van Dorn Street. While new roads may be limited, creation of new road connections could help to disperse traffic in the area. Additionally, no non-

motorized improvements have been recommended in the study such as constructing sidewalks or trails where they do not exist.

Fairfax County Department of Transportation recommends that based on the traffic study submitted along with the proposed mitigation measures, it does not appear that the nominator could mitigate the impacts associated with either proposed density. The mitigation measures proposed in the study are insufficient to handle the increase in density.